

The Principal in the High School:
Effectiveness in a Climate of Sharing

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Abstract

This pilot study developed a climate instrument which was administered in a sample of high schools in one board of education. Several tests were conducted in order to determine the reliability and internal consistency of the instrument. The ability of the instrument to identify the demographic differences of school and gender was also tested.

The relationship between leadership styles and an effective use of authority in creating a productive and rewarding work environment was the focus of this study. Attitudes to leadership and perceived school morale were investigated in a demographic study, a climate survey, as well as a body of related literature. In light of the empirical research, an attempt was made to determine the extent to which the authority figure's behaviour and adopted leadership style contributed to a positive school climate: one in which teachers were motivated to achieve to the best of their abilities by way of their commitment and service. The tone of authority assumed by the leader not only shapes the mood of the school environment but ultimately determines the efficiency and morale of the teaching staff.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The devil knew not what he did
when he made man politic.

- William Shakespeare

The word "power" connotes the ability to control or influence the actions of others. The primary purpose of power in an organization is to align and unify a variety of interests towards a common goal while preserving productivity and effectiveness. In the educational system, the position of authority implements power as one of the vehicles to promote change either in policy or in/by people. These changes, however, are not always able to meet the perceived needs of all parties concerned. Lukes (1981) indicated that power is employed if the powerholder gets the individual to do what he or she would otherwise not do. This situation suggests that the imposed action is worthwhile doing. If, on the other hand, the individual is not convinced that there is a need to change, power is viewed as aggression. It is in this light that power appears as manipulation, coercion, and domination, and, thereby, detracts from an atmosphere of willing and genuine cooperation.

Being "an authority" as opposed to being "in authority", as Russell (1973, p.5) indicates, is perceived as being instructive, supportive, and

ultimately satisfying for both the leader and the follower. A leader who earns the respect of others because of his/her expertise, and not by virtue of his/her position, is better able to create an atmosphere of trust.

This study examined the nature, allocation, and function of authority in secondary schools, and its effect on school climate. Formal structures of authority within the school were considered in order to determine how control is attained and maintained. The attitude towards present power structures within the system were also defined and reviewed in an attempt to evaluate their functional and moral legitimacy.

The Problem

Improving school effectiveness is a current area of interest in many Ontario schools. This emphasis may, in part, be due to extended separate school funding in 1986, declining enrolment, and concerns about the basic thinking and writing skills of high school graduates applying to post secondary institutions.

A prime motivator of this educational goal is the school principal. A number of current studies, including Watts' (1986) Authority and the Secondary Principal and Leithwood and Montgomery's (1986) Improving Principal

Effectiveness: The Principal Profile, suggested that a self-evaluation of the principal's role includes recognizing one's leadership style as well as considering the staff's perception of that style. One method of assessing the effectiveness of principals is to investigate the atmosphere of the work place. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to determine whether or not there are identifiable factors which affected school climate. The development of an instrument to test for these factors was needed as well as a group of individuals who were willing to participate.

Background

Leaders, in so far as they conformed to Weber's (1947) bureaucratic model, are authoritarian figures who exercise control over an organization in order to lessen the possibility of usurption. As early as 1850, schools, like other organizations, began to employ a classical management theory to secure - by advocating an organizational hierarchy with a vertical chain of command - traditional authority, administrative rules, regulations, and decision-making. Although Weber's bureaucratic model was considered practical because it stressed efficiency and goal-attainment - principles

which all organizations seek - it emphasized a technical approach to organizational management which ritualizes individual input and reduces it to a symbolic gesture of involvement rather than a genuine expression of need. Such a description of process remains a serviceable management theory.

In The Organization Man, Whyte (1956) maintained that the "protestant work ethic", which he defines as "the pursuit of individual salvation through hard work, thrift and competitive struggle" (p.4), does not harmonize with organization life which demands a collective will in order to maximize productivity. Hence, an ideological shift towards a "social ethic," or a belief in belongingness as the ultimate need of the individual, is necessary.

In order to accomplish its tasks, however, the school functions largely on a mechanistic level. In the 1960s, schools were noted for their orientation towards tasks (e.g., the factory model in Purkey and Novak (1984)), not people. In the 1980s, a faction of educational research began to stress the need for a humanistic approach, an approach which de-emphasized the formalities of a rigid and highly disciplined school structure in favor of a more individualized and inviting style. Although this style is not wholly satisfactory because of its charismatic affectedness, it does

stimulate the desire and need for shared or joint decision-making which no longer places the responsibility for the decision solely on the leader; instead it encourages the individual to see his/her role in the process as well.

For the purpose of this study, such a shift in focus is reflected in the Ministry guidelines, in particular, Chapter 61 of the Education Amendment Act, formerly Bill 82; O.S.I.S. (1984), which includes in its goals, " helping individual learners to achieve their potential in physical, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural and moral development" (p.3). This shift in focus is also reflected in the role of a powerful Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) influencing the attitudes and changing values of teachers as well as an interest in group dynamics that Jewell and Reitz (1981) maintained arose out of the expectations that managers have about the quality and acceptance of group decisions and new laws such as The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) which states, "Now that our rights will be written into the Constitution, it will be a constant reminder to our political leaders that they must wield their authority with caution and wisdom" (p.i). Those who acquire authority should adapt to this request for shared decision-making if they are to remain credible leaders capable of implementing policy and/or

change in the school system.

Rationale

No man is an island unto himself.

- John Donne

By examining the distribution, function, and implementation of authority in the high school setting, an exploration of a number of points of reference on the plane of interaction in which varying degrees of influence are centred can reveal that they have an affect on the working atmosphere in a school. Individual variables of authority constitute the points of reference and include nature, distribution, function, implementation, maintenance, and perception.

The shifting tensions between these variables can be identified by six leadership styles: authoritarian, bureaucratic, team management, laissez-faire, democratic, and charismatic. These styles adapted from Likert (1961) and Blake and Mouton (1964) defined the leader's use of authority as being mechanical, motivational, or humanistic, and affect the atmosphere of the work environment (see Appendix A).

A Philosophical Framework

In order to clarify the concerns of this study, a philosophical framework which identifies the basic concepts of power is first needed. The nature of power is rooted in the freedom of choice. Sartre (1957) claimed that man is condemned to be free and this responsibility is simply the logical requirement of the consequences of his freedom. According to Locke (1960), choice may be a composite of will, reason, and desire which contribute to the dual nature of authority, or *de jure* and *de facto*, as defined by Wolff (1970). Authority is the seat of power and has two intentions, that of control as a decision-making prerogative and direction in terms of goal implementation. Maintaining control and setting goals involve the use of a specific base of power. French and Raven (1959) identified coercive, legitimate, reward, referent, representative, and expert as bases or forms of power which the leader could employ in a given situation in order to influence others. These six sources of power are representative of six leadership styles: authoritarian, bureaucratic, team management, *laissez-faire*, democratic, and charismatic.

In terms of facilitating a functional analysis, these six styles may be aligned with an operational emphasis on three models of leadership: mechanical,

motivational, and humanistic (see Appendix A). While the mechanical leader subordinates the people to a pre-determined task, the humanistic leader tailors the task to the personal needs of his/her staff and the motivational leader is aware of the importance of both task (efficiency) and people (effectiveness) in accomplishing an educational goal and is thus able to integrate the tensions implicit in both leadership styles. Hence, the leader is perceived, in terms of productivity, as either people-oriented or task-oriented. A blending of these two perceptions is realized on the plane of effective interaction, in other words, in the work place where getting the job done while keeping people satisfied is the priority. The achievement of this goal enhances the self-image of the individual involved and reinforces his/her affiliation with others, including the leader. As a result, the teacher's self-esteem and self-actualization, Maslow's (1943) two higher level needs, affirm his/her personal power. The degree to which the individual in a position of authority understands the principle of control and influence defines its moral worth in terms of the optimal functioning of the organization. The application of this model was assessed in light of the results of the climate survey.

Importance of the Study

The current educational goal in Halton County, "Pursuing Excellence in Education through Commitment and Service" (1982), indicates a need to examine those elements which contribute to the overall success of the school system. The scarcity of studies that examine the correlation of factors affecting the school's atmosphere and efficiency suggests the need for further research. The register of authority adopted by the leader and its influence on staff morale are specific factors which can affect not only motivation and cooperation in the school, but ultimately the success of the educational system.

The purpose of the study was to correlate specific climate variables with the perception of climate, thereby establishing the relative importance of these variables in shaping school climate.

Statement of the Problem

The problem was to determine the role of perception in shaping school climate as it related to six factors which influenced the organizational structure of the school. The study endeavored to address the following questions:

1. Whether or not there were significant correlations between school climate and six climate categories - caring, renewal, opportunity for input, continuous academic and social growth and organization.
2. Whether or not there were differences across schools in the responses to the climate variables.
3. Whether or not there were differences between gender and responses to the climate categories.

Definitions of Terms

The terms defined include the concepts of authority, influence and power, the bases of power, leadership styles, bargaining positions, and types of climate.

Authority is the right to command others and the right to expect compliance with the demands. Two aspects of authority include de facto, which is existing or being actual though not by the legal establishment, and de jure which means by right or legal establishment. Influence is the process by which one person is affected by another's advice, suggestion, or order while power is the ability to control or regulate the actions of others.

The bases of power involve the perspectives of the follower and the leader. The perspectives of the follower include coercive, referent and representative

bases of power. Coercive power occurs when the follower perceives the powerholder as having the ability to inflict punishment or withhold a need. Referent power is the follower's desire to identify with the charismatic leader. Representative power involves the followers delegating power to the leader for the purpose of representing their interests and making decisions on their behalf. The perspectives of the leader include definitions for leadership, reward, and expert. Leadership is the administering of power through others. Reward occurs when the leader allocates a degree of responsibility to the follower. The expert is the leader who has knowledge that is useful in satisfying a need of the follower.

Five leadership styles are authoritarian, bureaucratic, charismatic, democratic, and laissez-faire. Authoritarian leadership is a style which enforces obedience to authority rather than allowing individual freedom of judgment and/or suggestions. Bureaucratic leadership is a style which has a high concern for function but a low concern for people. Charismatic leadership is a style which has the loyalty of the followers and achieves personal power but not legitimate power. Democratic leadership is a style which has a highly participative focus, one that enables followers to be included in decisions which concern them. Laissez-faire

is a style which has a low task and low people orientation.

Bargaining positions include definitions for bargaining power, and four actual bargaining positions - compromise, manipulation, mediation, and threat. The bargaining power of an individual is determined by the amount of skill and perceived weight one person has over another. A compromise results when both individuals acquiesce in order to arrive at a mutually agreeable decision. Manipulation results when appearing not to be in authority, the individual may be in a powerful position to alter the other's opinion. Mediation is employed by a professional negotiator who determines the best possible solution for both parties when both parties have reached a stalemate. A threat can be employed if the individual threatening has the ability to carry the threat through, thus resulting in the other person being influenced.

The two climate types are closed and open climates. A closed climate exists when an atmosphere of apathy results in dissatisfied individuals, low task achievement, and unfulfilled needs. An open climate exists when an atmosphere of cooperation and well-being is present thus enabling the worker to feel satisfied and able to achieve goals because personal and social needs are being met.

Six climate variables in the climate survey include caring, continuous academic and social growth, opportunity for input, organization, renewal, and respect/trust. Caring is a genuine concern for the well-being of others. Continuous academic and social growth relates the affects of programme and people on the development of the individual. An opportunity for input is the individual's ability to participate in decision-making. Organization is the implementation of rules and regulations in order to facilitate the efficient and effective functioning of the school. Renewal occurs when the programme is regularly updated and innovations sought. Respect/trust is the admiration and faith in the leader's skills and abilities.

Outline of the Remainder of the Thesis

Chapter Two: Review of Related Literature, explores past and present studies in leadership and climate. Chapter Three: Research Methods, outlines the approach taken to conduct the study and the methods of analysis employed to explore the findings and test the hypotheses. Chapter Four: Results, lists the results of the tests in seven tables. Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions and Implications, discusses the results outlined in the tables, assesses the usefulness of the

climate survey for possible future studies, and examines the relevance of the pilot study to the review of literature.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Managers do things right.
Leaders do the right thing.

- Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus

This empirical study attempted to explore a conceptual framework of leadership from both an historical and theoretical perspective in the hope of determining those factors which may contribute to the efficient and moral use of authority in organizations. Examining literature which has an historical relationship to the use of power is the most beneficial in establishing an understanding of those aspects which are associated with leadership.

Machiavelli's (1700) The Prince, a well known sixteenth century treatise, raised the question of whether it is better to have a relationship based on love or fear. Blake and Mouton (1969) used the terms personal power and position power. Although Machiavelli suggested that it is best to be both loved and feared, a relationship based on fear is more beneficial than a relationship based on love as long term respect is more apt to occur with position, not personality. Thomas Hobbes' (1651) view of man and government, like Machiavelli, advocated the necessity of absolute sovereignty. According to Hobbes (1651), the sovereign

must control all property and wealth, punish but not take revenge, teach doctrines, and administer justice equally to the rich and the poor if he wishes to maintain the rule of a commonwealth. Will is the nature of the ruler's authority and the source of his laws.

Unlike Hobbes, John Locke (1971) in Two Treatises of Government did not advocate an atheistic, totalitarian state, but placed a heavy reliance on God, with the state of nature representing a state of equality where all men live in perfect freedom. The government's responsibility is to protect life, liberty, and property rights, as well as administer the necessary laws to keep citizens free from a state of war. If the government fails to fulfill its responsibility to the people, it forfeits its right to represent the people. The absence of responsible representation becomes equated with the state of nature at which point people are free to choose another government. A government that refuses to step down once its trust has been forfeited, rules in tyranny: It becomes a state where the people are free to rebel.

This right to anarchy is the focus of Robert Wolff's (1970) essay, In Defense of Anarchism, an examination of the confrontation between political authority and moral autonomy in society. Individuals generally acknowledge the claim of authority simply by the "prescriptive force of tradition" (p.6) or the

legitimate power of the leader. Wolff (1970) explored "casuistical politics": the conditions which make it morally right for an individual to obey the laws and social ideals of equality and achievement. Because human beings feel the force of tradition so strongly, they will often unthinkingly accept the claims of authority made by a powerholder without considering their personal stake or obligation once the authority of a leader has been acknowledged. Accepting the power of reason within the self and recognizing the moral obligation one has to the self make each human being an author of the commands he or she obeys.

This freedom of choice to decide for oneself the role that authority will play in one's life is the basic premise of Saul Alinsky's (1971) Rules for Radicals. Our dependence on public authority has resulted in depersonalization and apathy in the individual. Alinsky perceived the world

not of angels but of angels, where men [women] speak of principles but act on power principles a world where we are always immoral; a world where "reconciliation" means that one side gets the power and the other side gets reconciled to it. (p. 51)

Rather, he believed that power should be used for an equitable distribution of the means of life for all people.

In contrast to Alinsky's concern of power as an equally distributed utility, is Mill's moral expression of power as the greatest good for the greatest number. This principle is qualified in Elizabeth Janeway's (1980) contemporary view in Powers of the Weak.

Power involves relationships, we cannot think of power as being simply a possession of the powerful If we believe that power properly belongs to the powerful, we are giving them more than power, we are giving them the right to use it as they see fit, not just to direct events but to dominate the rest of us What the powerful need is the consent of the governed to their actions as proper, acceptable, free of blame. This consent can only be granted by the governed. (pp.5-6)

The importance of this contrast between Janeway's and Mill's perspective versus Alinsky's perspective reflects a shift in focus from the autonomy of society as a whole to the autonomy of the individual. Alinsky followed a philosophical exploration of anarchy which outlined

various practical strategies and focused on the attainment of control through bargaining. The tactics suggested involve knowing the opponent well, being able to out think or outmanoeuvre the other person, appearing powerless and thus possessing more power than the adversary and recognizing conflict as a situation not as a function of personality.

A striking tactic employed as a means to establishing a position of authority was the passive resistance employed by Mahatma Gandhi and Jesus Christ. Jay Haley's (1971) essay The Power Tactics of Jesus Christ explained that authority will often lead an opponent into capitulation. According to Haley, it is the basic strategy of leaders of communist, fascist, black power, or mass movements to seek support outside the establishment by cultivating the consciousness of people who are neglected and powerless. The leaders who do not seek personal power but are merely interested in fulfilling a mission - often at great personal sacrifice - are referred to as charismatic. If and when such individuals do appear, their power of persuasion seems unlimited because it discredits authority and defies opposition. Charismatic as Gandhi and Jesus were, their actual and perceived challenges, to the authority of the state curtailed their missions and cost them their lives. While this style of leadership is perhaps the most

compelling, it involves the greatest risk because the leader must constantly renew his/her credibility rather than practice his/her leadership.

Defining the nature and role of authority is a question which still confronts society today. In education, for example, the recent promotion of celebrating "excellence" has placed greater demands on improving the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the school, its programmes, and staff. Mann (1970) viewed the principal's role as shifting from an emphasis on educational values to educational mechanics. Approaches to leadership include both style (the leader's attitudes and mannerism), and behaviour (the leader's response and actions).

Leadership studies have attempted to create a formula which correlates the role of leadership and various organizational models. For example, Weber's (1947) bureaucratic model, acknowledging the right of authority to persuade others, was a "rational, empirical approach" which emphasizes the power of reason and the significance of data and evidence. Argyris (1970), on the other hand, prescribed the "normative-re-education mode" which encourages members of an organization to become a committed group involved in the decisions that affect them. To confuse the matter even more, Ouchi's (1981) Theory Z approach, like Argyris' research, offered

an alternative to McGregor's Theory X and Y model (1960). While Theory X and Y suggested that a manager operates on the assumption that people are either dissatisfied or satisfied with their work, Theory Z established workers as the key to the organization's productivity. Theory Z advocated collective values, participative decision-making, clear objectives, a philosophy of management, and most important, a holistic concern for people. This holistic relation between individuals is encouraged by a wide power base of group-oriented individuals or "organization men", as Whyte (1956) referred to them, as opposed to the hierarchical vertical chain of command evident in Weber's bureaucratic structure. These diverse models indicate the range of approaches to leadership.

In the past twenty years, leadership studies have concentrated on four types: contingency models, situational approaches, behavioural models, and participative approaches. It is of value to review these models and approaches in order to determine which approach is most suitable for creating a positive school climate. Fiedler's (1967) contingency model was the first study to focus on both the style and behaviour of the leader. Group effectiveness was determined by the leadership style and the situation's favourableness. Likewise, House's (1971) Path Goal Theory explored situational factors which affected the effectiveness of

leaders, but unlike Fiedler, House identified effectiveness in terms of the workers' perceptions, not in terms of task accomplishment. Misumi and Peterson (1985) provided empirical evidence of actual and experienced leadership which reflected substantial emphasis on both P (performance leadership that involves forming and reaching group goals) and M (maintenance which entails preserving group social stability). PM-type leadership contributed to the emergence of high performance norms (Sasaki and Yamaguchi, 1971) and member satisfaction (Misumi and Seki, 1971). While the contingency models do focus on specific variables of leadership, the relationship between the leader and his/her environment is tenuous.

The notion that different types of situations require different types of leadership was the premise of Blake and Mouton's (1964) The Managerial Grid and The Three Dimensional Theory formulated by Reddin (1966). Both showed the levels of integration which exist between concern for people and concern for task. Reddin, however, added the dimension of effectiveness to his grid maintaining that an appropriate and effective leadership style was largely dependent on the situation. Further testing of Reddin's model would clarify the specific aspects of an appropriate style and situation. Hersey and Blanchard (1969) expanded the grids of Reddin and

Blake and Mouton by suggesting that the leadership style in a given situation was determined by the maturity of the individual and group in understanding the dynamics involved in the task the leader wishes to accomplish. In general, situational approaches require a sophisticated knowledge and awareness which can only be acquired over a long period of time, hence its usefulness in day to day situations is unlikely, as it is most suitable as a career goal for the leader.

Halpin's (1966) findings, based on the Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), indicated that, generally, school administrators were most effective when they scored high on both dimensions of leadership behaviour - consideration and initiating structure. He also noted that the leader was often involved in some degree of conflict as managers tended to emphasize initiating structure while the employee was more concerned with consideration. Behavioural approaches to examining leadership have become more prevalent as the role of perception in predicting individual behaviour has received more attention in the literature on leadership. French and Raven (1968) recognized the ability of the leader to guide others if the leader is viewed as an expert in the job and becomes effective in interpersonal relationships. Becoming an effective administrator entails learning how to interpret

the patterns of behaviour of the teachers and the school community as well as knowing their expectations and adjusting one's behaviour accordingly. Isherwood (1973), in his study on authority, concluded that the principal's behaviour should reflect both service to the staff and leadership. "Formal authority was positively and significantly related to the teacher's sense of powerlessness and negatively and significantly related to both the teacher's loyalty to the principal and a sense of job satisfaction" (p.301). The difficulty with the behavioural model is that the followers' perceptions of the behaviour is unreliable as it may vary from individual to individual and thereby create an unpredictable response pattern in the work place.

Participation requires an active leader who shares information with others, prevents dominant individuals from dominating proceedings, involves the most reticent, and helps people communicate effectively. Vroom and Yetton's (1973) model of decision-making did not promote one style of leadership but rather, it stated that the focus should be on the situation and the identified problem to be solved. This model provided guidelines for determining the appropriate degree of participation in decision-making. The findings of Simpkins and Friesen (1969) and Knoop and O'Reilly (1977) indicated that teachers expressed a strong preference for

group involvement in decision-making and perceived matters external to the classroom as being the domain of those with higher official authority. The Hawthorne Studies (1937) and Lewin (1935) concurred that groups were the building blocks of organizations as man's productivity in the work place was determined by his sense of belonging and well being. Likert's (1967) scale of management systems, including exploitative-authoritative, benevolent-authoritative, consultative, and participative, further supported the claim that participative management was the ideal approach. Research identified effective leaders as possessing more favourable attitudes towards the self and others (Combs, Richards & Richards, 1949) and regularly involving others in the business of the organization. Burbules (1986) concluded that the success of the organization is dependent on the emphasis of

participatory rather than hierarchical decision-making, collective and cooperative tasks rather than specialized ones, and decentralized responsibility focussed and relegated by fiat....Organizations of this type are more democratic in nature and [thus] less likely to introduce relations of coercion and manipulation. [Yet],

Unfortunately, even these organizations have a tendency to disintegrate into more rigid and formal structures for the sake of "efficiency". (p.108)

Participation involves the sharing of responsibility, decision-making, authority, and ultimately, power. The role of the leader in this approach is to allocate a sense of commitment to all individuals by encouraging them to play an active role in creating an atmosphere of well-being in the work place contingent on achievement and satisfaction.

Given that an organization becomes effective and efficient in part by the accomplishment of goals, the satisfaction of those in the organization who are expected to fulfill the tasks must be taken into consideration and their progress monitored. Maslow's need-fulfillment theory suggested that the higher level need of actualization or self-fulfillment affects the behaviour of the individual and consequently, his/her work motivation. Although the climate or atmosphere of a school is unique to each school and perceptual in nature, the relevance of examining school climate is made evident in the numerous studies conducted in this area as well as the growing interest in human relations skills as an identifiable characteristic of effective principals,

suggested Renihan (1985).

According to Halpin and Croft (1963), "Perceptual data is usually accepted as a direct indicator of normative climate" (p.387). Actual behaviour is considered less important than perceived behaviour because perception is what controls one's responses. Brady (1985) confirmed this point by indicating that "It is generally argued that the perceptions of those involved, even if not a true reflection of reality, still have a greater effect on organizational climate than what is actually the case" (p.54). The Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ) developed by Halpin and Croft (1963) relies on perception to define climate and asserted that "climate profiles may indeed constitute a better criterion of a school's 'effectiveness' than many other measures ..." (pp.82-3). Based on teachers' and principals' perceptions, six types of climate were identified on a continuum ranging from an open to a closed climate in the school (see Definition of Terms).

Authenticity was defined by Halpin (1966) and Hoy and Henderson (1982) as a genuine, unpretentious, accountable, and non-manipulating leader and was the basic premise of the Leader Authenticity Scale (LAS), subtests of OCDQ and the Pupil Control Ideology Form (PCL). The results of the survey showed that the staff's perception of the principal was significantly related to

the openness of the organizational climate. Flagg (1964) also found a relationship between the type of climate and characteristics of the principal.

Hall, Rutherford, Hord and Huling (1984) examined the three styles adopted by principals and noted their effects on school improvement. A possible relationship between the styles of initiator, manager and responder, and three climate variables, motivation, tone, and behaviour, was investigated. The findings revealed that a more positive climate was associated with a manager style (democratic leader) and a less positive climate arose with a responder style (charismatic leader). In this case, the principal's ability to create a positive climate in the school was dependent on employing participation in decision-making. Tagiuri (1968) claimed that the total environment, not simply the perceptions of individuals, must be examined in order to determine the climate. He identified four dimensions as having a direct effect on atmosphere: ecology, milieu, social system, and culture. The principal's ability to integrate these various interpretative values into a harmonious yet multi-faceted organization may influence not only the atmosphere of the work place but, also, the satisfaction of those working in the school.

"Blueprint for Excellence" (1985), an Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation publication,

recommended that a survey be conducted regularly in order to determine school climate needs and maintain open communication which ensure staff involvement and staff ownership of the school atmosphere. The nature and criteria of a school climate survey should be geared to the needs of the individual school and take into consideration the aims, objectives, and goals of the school and the staff.

Summary

Improving school effectiveness is the goal of the Halton Board's Effective Schools Task Force, a group which has prepared a focus for the school system in a five-year plan. This plan for school improvement includes assessing teachers' attitudes toward the system and their schools as well as enhancing teacher involvement in planning and school decision-making, and developing assessment instruments and strategies to enhance school climate. In keeping with this plan for school improvement, a review of literature pertaining to leadership and school climate has indicated that the components of school effectiveness have not been as extensively explored in the educational setting as they should have been. If the school leader is perceived as the pulse of school life, then his/her style, behaviour,

and skills should have an impact on the overall success of the school.

It is only by maintaining a sense of belonging and well-being in an atmosphere which is fundamentally conducive to productivity that a moral imperative to sound leadership can be realized. Sound leadership is leadership that grounds its authority in the process of continuous self-evaluation with an eye to not merely contextual validity but to ethical necessity.

Evaluating the atmosphere in a school can, in part, be achieved by developing and administering a climate instrument in the school. The instrument should address all aspects of school life and attempt to consider several climate variables in order to assist in the identification of specific needs and concerns. These variables, once identified in the findings, can become the basis for establishing a school growth plan towards a more effective school.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

Test Hypotheses

Through the creation of a climate survey, three hypotheses were tested.

There are no significant correlations between school climate and six climate variables - respect/trust, caring, renewal, opportunity for input, continuous academic and social growth and organization.

There are no differences across schools in the responses to the climate variables.

There are no differences between gender and the responses to the climate variables.

Research Approach

A method suited to obtaining information about the nature of school climate is to question those individuals who are working in the school. Administering a questionnaire which covers all aspects of school life including school operations to concerns of the staff and students' concerns should provide a general perspective of the school's environment. The perceptions of staff may even identify specific factors as being more conducive than others in creating a sense of well-being

and job satisfaction in the work place. By obtaining demographic information about the sample population, group norms may reveal that different perceptions about the school atmosphere exist.

Selection of Subjects

This study involved the use of human subjects in a survey of climate which required permission from the board personnel. After an approval by the Research Advisory Committee of the Halton Board of Education, a meeting was held with area superintendents to discuss the survey plan and address any concerns or questions. It was suggested that several schools might not wish to participate as a result of a recent transfer of principals or of having recently been the subject of another survey. As a result, twelve high school principals were contacted and permission was requested to conduct the survey in each of the schools. Four principals eventually agreed to participate.

Instrumentation

The survey consisted of two questionnaires, the demographic variables sheet and the climate survey. The demographic sheet identified the characteristics of the

respondents by gender, age group, years of teaching experience, grades taught and teaching, position, and qualifications (see Appendix C).

The climate survey contained seventy questions and was adapted from Slezak (1984); R. Fox (1980); The CFK School Climate Profile, G.K. Stern (1963); Organization Climate Index, R. Likert (1967); and Profile of Organizational Characteristics Measure (see Appendix B). By including items from various existing surveys, the climate survey attempted to represent the broadest variety of needs and concerns. The survey also tested for the presence of several climate variables found in the school environment. The variables arising from existing questionnaires included respect/trust, opportunity for input, school renewal, caring, continuous academic and social growth, and organization (see Appendix D).

Pilot Study

A pre-test of the climate survey was conducted in the home school. The purpose of the pilot study was to test the clarity of the format, the wording of individual questions, and the amount of time it would take to complete the questionnaire (see Appendix E). A random selection of participants, including twelve individuals

from the heads of department and administration, completed and returned the questionnaire and individual suggestions and recommendations were included in a reworking of the climate survey. Generally, comments indicated that the format was clear and the length of the questionnaire was appropriate. Suggestions were offered which assisted in clarifying the wording and numbering of several questions. As Nelson High School was the pilot study group, the school was not included in the sample population of the survey.

Data Collection and Recording

The demographic and climate surveys were mailed to all teaching and administrative staff in four of sixteen high schools under the jurisdiction of the Halton Board. These four schools varied from one another in terms of location, population density, size, and student needs. Nelson High School was omitted from this study as it served as the pre-test group for the survey.

Since the completion of the climate survey was voluntary, individuals received and returned the questionnaires via board mail, thereby assuring their anonymity as even the school at which they were teaching was not identified.

A covering letter (see Appendix F) explained the

purpose of the study as well as assuring those who wished to participate that all questionnaires would be confidential.

Once the packages were delivered to the schools, approximately two months lapsed before they were all returned. Each principal distributed the survey either at a staff meeting or accompanied by his own covering letter to each teaching and administrative staff's mail box. Each principal also determined his own system for obtaining returns, with a reminder either from me or the school secretary.

Method of Analysis

The purpose of this analysis was to determine the internal consistency and reliability of the instrument and to ascertain the ability of the instrument to detect differences in two of the demographic variables - school and gender. In order to test the instrument, four tests were conducted. A Cronbach Alpha correlation was used to analyze whether or not the items in the questionnaire were measuring the climate variables they represented. A Coefficient Correlation determined if the six climate categories were significantly related to climate and a Stepwise Regression Analysis explained the variance of the climate categories in school climate.

The application and usefulness of the instrument was considered in three tests. Identifying the means tested for differences in the responses to climate and the climate categories. An Anova, analysis of variance, tested for differences by gender in the perceptions of school climate while an Ancova, analysis of covariance, tested for differences by school when gender was controlled.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

There were 146 surveys returned from the four schools representing 49% of the number distributed. The rate of returns from the schools was 72%, 66%, 21%, and 43% respectively.

The Cronbach Alpha values (see Table 1 below) shows the internal consistency of each of the subtests with climate showing the highest value (.923).

Subtests	Cronbach
Respect and Trust	.713*
Opportunity	.768*
Continuous Academic and Social Growth	.876*
Organization	.852*
Renewal	.563*
Caring	.771*
Climate	.923*

* $p \leq .05$.

Table 1: Subtest Cronbach Alpha Values

Table 2 lists the number of items in each of the subtests, the means (m) and the standard deviations (sd).

Subtests	no. of items	m	sd
Climate	24	90.849	15.520
Respect	12	48.795	4.449
Opportunity	5	18.596	4.163
Renewal	5	19.801	2.434
Caring	9	36.000	4.898
Continuous			
A/S Growth	13	49.959	8.963
Organization	6	22.863	4.920

a1 = never; 5 = always

Table 2: Summary of Analysis: Ratings of Subtests Across Schools

Table 3 shows the correlation between the variable, climate, and each of the other six variables. The correlation coefficient was significant at $p \leq .001$.

Variable Type	r
Respect/Trust	.479
Renewal	.466
Opportunity	.390
Caring	.826
Continuous A/S	.881
Organization	.829

* $p \leq .001$.

Table 3: Correlation Coefficients Between School Climate Subtest and Each of the Six Subtests

Table 4 reveals that the two subtests, Continuous Academic and Social Growth and Caring account for 82.4% of the variance. The addition of the other subtests did not account for any appreciable new variance.

	R	R ²	F*
Step 1			
Continuous A/S	.880	.774	487.8
Step 2			
Caring	.908	.824	331.3
Step 3			
Organization	.925	.857	240.4
Step 4			
Opportunity	.926	.859	211.7
Step 5			
Respect	.927	.859	168.7
Step 6			
Renewal	.927	.859	139.7

*all significant $p \leq .001$.

Regression Equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Climate} = & -4.168 + .074 (\text{Renewal}) + .082 (\text{Respect}) \\ & + -.211 (\text{Opportunity}) + .983 \\ & (\text{Organization}) + 1.105 (\text{Caring}) + 6.245 \\ & (\text{Continuous Academic and Social Growth}) \end{aligned}$$

Table 4: Stepwise Regression Analysis of Six Factors
Showing the Percent Variance Explained in School
Climate

In Stepwise selection, the variables are entered in decreasing order of probability F (see Table 3) in an equation which includes the dependent variable, climate, and the independent variable. Then the next variable with the highest probability of F is added to the regression equation and a multiple R was determined between the dependent variable, climate, and the two independent variables. As the variables are added they account for an increasing proportion of the total variance. In Table 4, the highest probability of F, Continuous Academic and Social Growth, was entered first, and followed by Caring and then Organization when 85.7%

of the variance is explained by Step 3. The addition of the other variables did not account for any appreciable degree of variance.

For each of the subtests, Table 5 outlines the number of respondents and the means for each of the schools and the significance of differences across schools.

Subtests	Schools					
	no.of items	1 n=45	2 n=62	3 n=21	4 n=18	F
Climate	24	91.60	89.31	86.76	99.08	2.475
Respect/Trust	12	49.76	47.66	49.71	49.22	2.468
Opportunity	5	19.53	16.77	20.29	20.56	8.286***
Renewal	5	19.76	19.27	20.57	20.83	2.859*
Caring	9	36.00	35.21	36.90	37.67	1.487
Continuous	13	50.53	47.55	51.90	54.56	3.655**
Organization	6	22.89	22.40	22.86	24.39	.764

***p ≤ .001.

**p ≤ .01.

*p ≤ .05.

Table 5: Means of Subtests by Schools

Table 6 shows differences by gender of the variable, climate. The results demonstrate that a significant difference exists between male and female respondents in their perception of school climate.

	n	m	F	p*
Males	81	93.48	4.815	.030
Females	61	87.69		

Table 6: Summary of Analysis of School Climate by Gender

Table 7 provides the results of an analysis of covariance of school climate by school with gender as the covariate. The table does not indicate a significant difference across schools in the perception of school climate once gender differences are controlled.

Source of Variation	ss	df	ms	F	p
Main Effects	1692.752	3	564.25	2.45	.066
School					
Covariates	728.031	1	728.03	3.16	.078
Gender					
Explained	2420.782	4	605.19	2.62	.037
Residual	32505.903	141	230.54		

Table 7: Ancova School Climate by School With Gender as Covariate

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

To lead,
one must follow.

- Loa Tzu

Summary

The focus of this study was to develop a school climate instrument and to apply it in several high schools. A further objective was to determine the internal consistency of the climate instrument and to explore the relationship between school climate and six climate categories derived from existing surveys and related literature. In a review of related literature, it was indicated that there is little consensus about how a leader can assist in establishing a sense of wellbeing and satisfaction in the school environment. An exploration of various leadership studies revealed that a leader who employs a humanistic approach that encourages shared responsibility and shared decision-making is more inclined to achieve a positive school atmosphere. In the research study conducted, both the climate survey and the demographic variables, school and gender, demonstrated a relationship with the test hypotheses.

Conclusions

The pilot study endeavored to answer three questions in order to determine the role of perception in shaping school climate:

1. Whether or not there were significant correlations between school climate and six climate variables - caring, renewal, opportunity for input, continuous academic and social growth and organization.
2. Whether or not there were differences across schools in the responses to the climate variables.
3. Whether or not there were differences between gender and the responses to the climate variables.

The results indicated that there were significant correlations between school climate and the six climate variables. There were not, however, any significant differences across schools in the responses to the climate variables, nor were there differences when gender was added as a control. Differences by gender were noted, nonetheless, in the responses to the climate survey in a given school.

A discussion of the findings follows the order of the tables as they are presented in the Results. The Cronbach Alpha correlations (Table 1) ranging from .713

for Respect/Trust to .923 for Climate were fairly high, indicating a high level of internal consistency for each of the subtests. These values showed that participants responded similarly to the items in each of the subtests listed, suggesting a unifactorial reference in the responses to each of the subtests. The high value of the Climate subtest with 24 items suggests that this particular subtest may be useful as a quick test of school climate.

Table 2 illustrated the number of items in each subtest and the overall mean for the four schools involved in the study.

The correlation of each of the six subtests to the climate subtest are shown in Table 3. The highest correlations ranged from .777 for the Continuous Academic and Social Growth subtest to .217 for the Renewal subtest. The differences in the correlations may be explained by examining the items found in the subtests. Items in the category of Renewal relate to the organization of school and school tasks while items in the category of Continuous Academic and Social Growth explore the needs of students and staff. Hence, it appears that an emphasis on people and not tasks is more related to respondents' perception of school climate. The correlations are also all significant.

The Stepwise Regression Analysis (Table 4) showed

that the six factors together explained 85.9% of the variance in school climate. Three of the variables, Continuous Academic and Social Growth, Caring and Organization, however, explained most of the variance in school climate while Opportunity, Respect/Trust, and Renewal did not contribute more to an explanation of the variance in school climate.

Table 5 showed the means across schools and the significance of differences among the four schools. Significant differences across schools were present in three of the subtests (Opportunity, Renewal, and Continuous Academic and Social Growth) with the Climate subtest just below the 5% level of significance ($p=.06$). By comparing the means ($x = 90.849$) (Table 2) to the means of each of the six subtests (Table 5), a principal of one of the four schools may be able to determine the degree to which the school has an open or closed climate (see Definition of Terms).

Table 6 showed differences by gender in school climate subtest responses. Differences by gender were significant ($p=.030$) with males responding more positively than females. A further analysis of differences among schools in the school climate subtest was undertaken in which gender was controlled as a covariate. Differences among schools were not significant.

In conclusion, the test hypotheses outlined in Methods stated:

There are no significant correlations between climate and six variables of climate - caring, renewal, opportunity for input, continuous academic and social growth, and organization.

There are no differences across schools in the responses to the variables of climate.

There are no differences between gender in the responses to the variables of climate.

The results indicated that there was a significant correlation between school climate and each of the six variables of climate. The second hypothesis, that there were significant differences across schools was not supported by the findings. Although the hypothesis was not supported, it has a high probability of F to be important. Finally, the third hypothesis, which states that there were significant differences by gender, was supported in the results.

Implications

In this pilot study a school climate instrument was developed and several additional tests of factors that influenced school climate were devised. Two of the

variables, Continuous Academic and Social Growth and Caring, which focus on people, explain most of the variance. Of the remaining four variables, three, which do not contribute a great deal to the variance in school climate, are task-oriented.

The limitation of this study is that only four schools in one school system were utilized. Additional research could include a study of climate in more schools and boards which would greatly enhance the interpretation of the findings outcome or even a study of school climate in a given area or school over time to examine changes in school climate. Also, a study of the demographic variables, years of service, position, and type of school could be undertaken to show their possible effects.

The value of this study is that it incorporates five independent tests into one comprehensive test for exploring school climate and the climate subtest offers a shorter quick measure of school climate. The degree to which a school has an open or closed climate compared to other schools participating in a given study could be examined by comparing the system mean to the mean of the individual school. The remaining six subtests, when administered, could serve as a basis of determining what factors in school affect school climate.

The most significant implication of the findings is that there appears to be specific indicators of

climate which would support a productive and satisfactory work environment. The task of a responsible principal is to maintain a school climate that is practical, responsive to a variety of needs, and promotes a sense of community. Being a good listener, communicating frequently on a one-to-one basis, encouraging staff to high levels of performance, and improving teacher involvement in planning and school decision-making help to ensure that the goals of the school are a shared responsibility. These behaviours attest to a leadership style that attracts rather than compels followers. The acceptance of this vision is largely dependent on the expression of personal power in its finest form which involves the principal's willingness to share his/her power with others. By providing each member of the staff with the need of being active in the process of decision-making, the principal can not only relay his commitment and interest in this goal but also to provide his/her staff with the opportunity to each achieve his/her own personal power.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
THE PHILOSOPHY OF POWER

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Figure 1:1

Stage 1

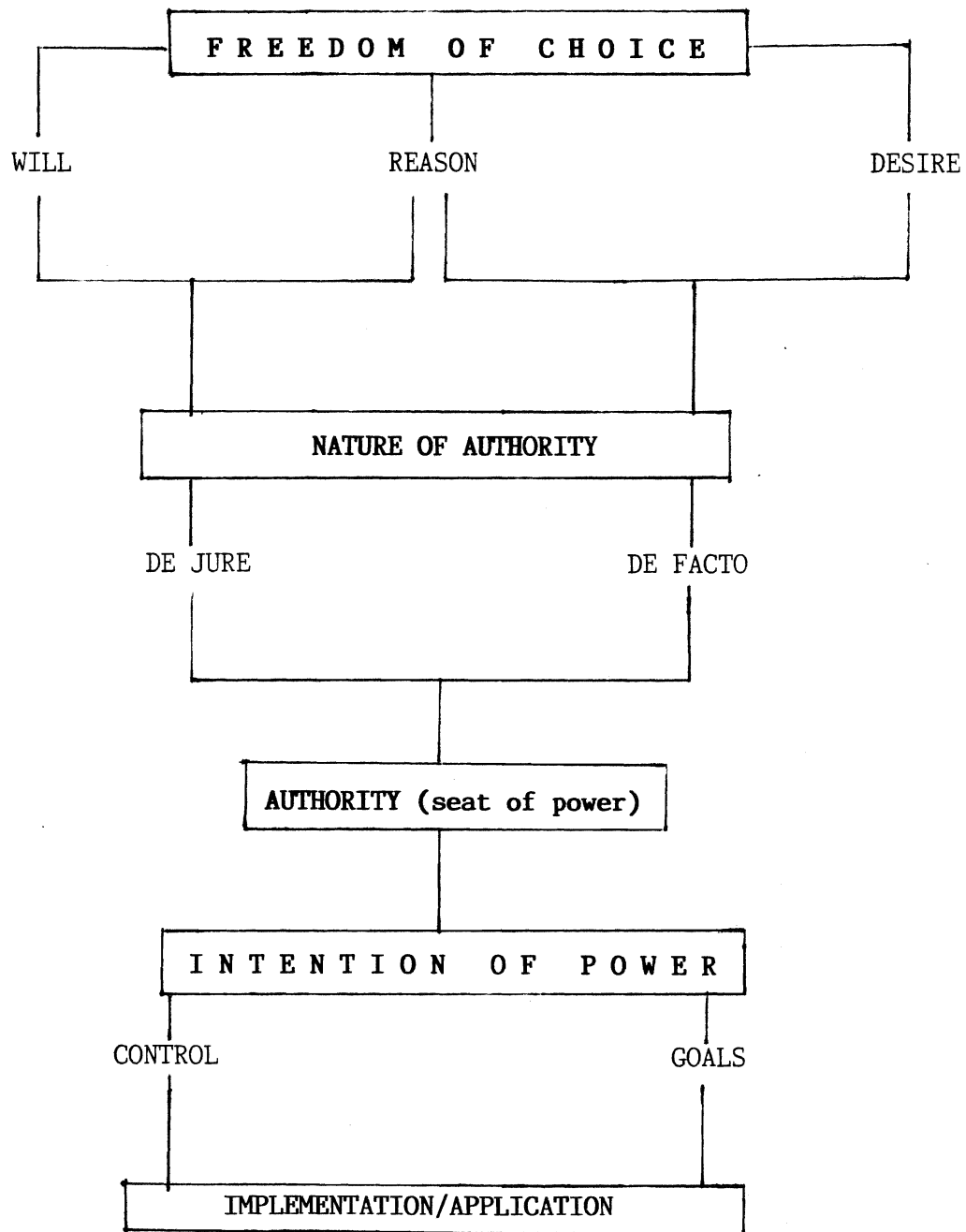


Figure 1:1

Stage 2

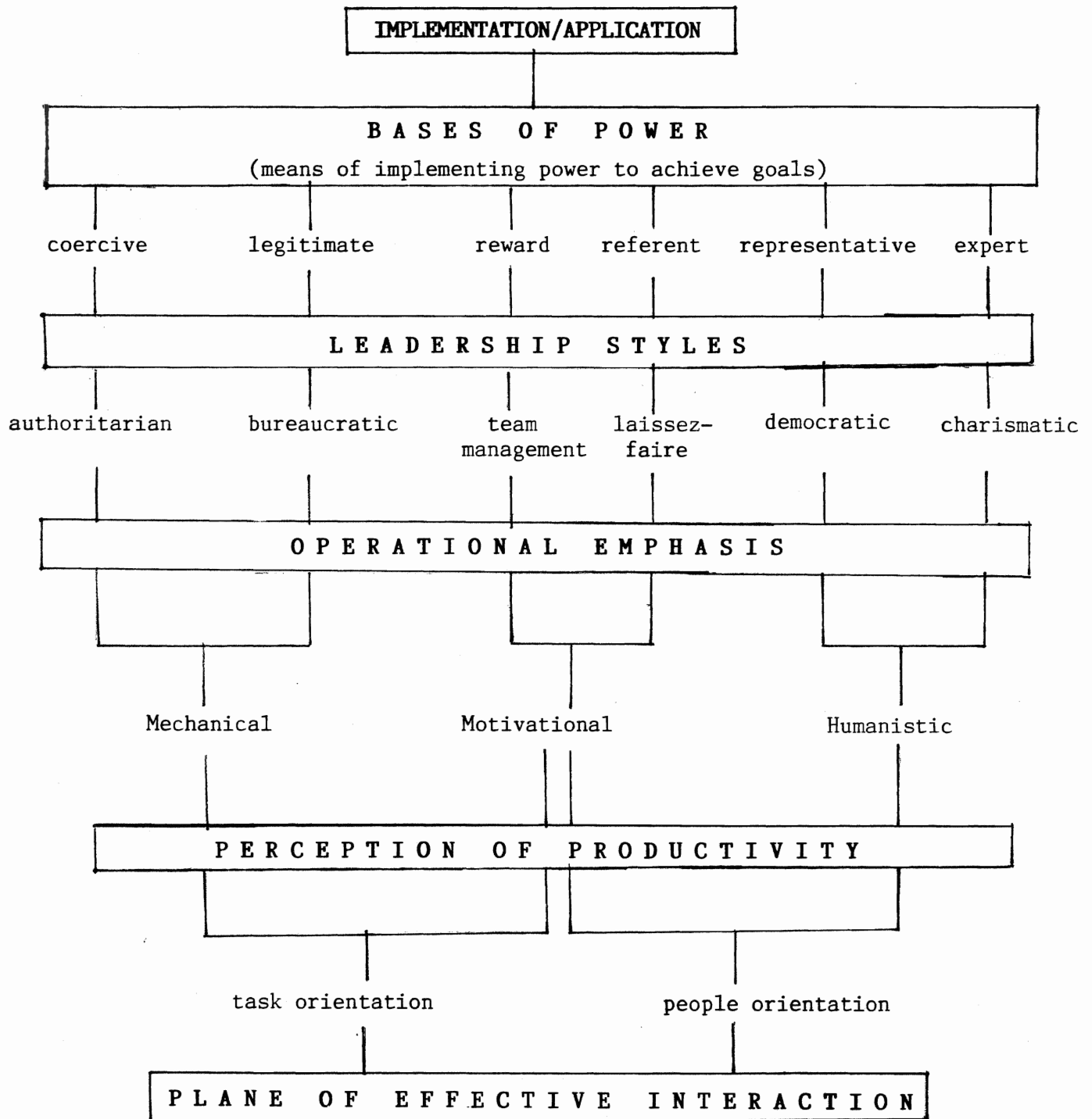
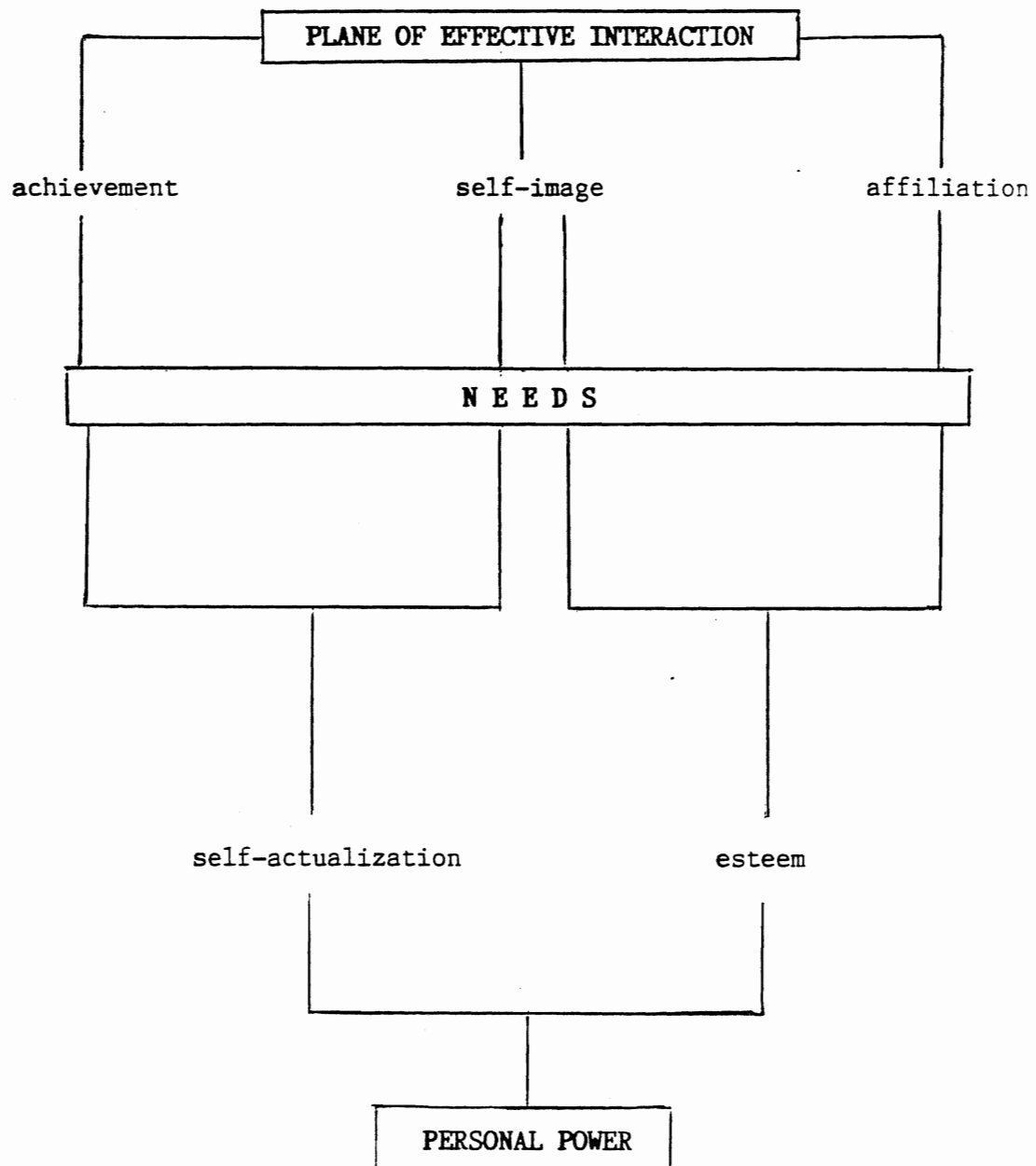


Figure 1:1

Stage 3

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APPENDIX B

CLIMATE SURVEY

Select the most appropriate response for each statement and place the corresponding number in the space provided.

5- Always 4 - Frequently 3 - Not Sure
2- Infrequently 1 - Never

- 1.1 In this school even low achieving students are respected. _____
- 1.2 Teachers treat students as persons. _____
- 1.3 The cooperation of parents is viewed as important in the school. _____
- 1.4 Teachers from one subject area or grade level respect those from other subject and/or grade areas. _____
- 1.5 Teachers in this school are proud to be teachers. _____
- 1.6 The principal makes his/her presence felt throughout the school. _____
- 2.1 Students feel that teachers are "on their side". _____
- 2.2 Although the teaching staff does not always agree, concerns are shared openly. _____
- 2.3 Our principal shares his/her concerns informally with the staff. _____
- 2.4 Students can count on teachers to
 - a. listen to their side of the story _____
 - b. be fair _____
- 2.5 Teachers generally trust students to use good judgment. _____
- 3.1 In this school, I feel my ideas are listened to and used. _____

- 3.2 When important decisions are made about the programmes in this school, I have personally been involved in some of the discussions. _____
- 3.3 Decisions concerning school operations are made in this school by a governing council with representation from staff and administration. _____
- 3.4 While I do not have a vote on every decision made in this school, I do feel that my views are taken into consideration. _____
- 3.5 When all is said and done, I feel that I matter in this school. _____
- 4.1 When a problem arises, it is viewed as a challenge and not simply another worry. _____
- 4.2 Teachers are encouraged to be innovative instructors. _____
- 4.3 When a student has a specific problem, the administration will work on a plan to assist the student. _____
- 4.4 Students are encouraged by teachers to be creative in classroom discussion. _____
- 4.5 When new programmes are introduced, careful effort is made to adapt them to to the particular needs of this school. _____
- 5.1 There is someone in this school that I can count on. _____
- 5.2 The principal really cares about students. _____
- 5.3 I feel that staff in this school care about me as a person. _____
- 5.4 School is a good place to be because I feel wanted and needed here. _____
- 5.5 People at this school are friendly and kind. _____
- 6.1 This school makes students enthusiastic about learning. _____

- 6.2 Teachers feel comfortable approaching the vice principal about any matter. _____
- 6.3 Attendance is good; students stay away only for urgent and unavoidable reasons. _____
- 6.4 Parents, teachers, and students would rise to the defense of the school's programme if it were challenged. _____
- 6.5 I like working in this school. _____
- 7.1 Most teachers in this school are seeking better ways of teaching and learning. _____
- 7.2 Students feel that the school programme is meaningful and relevant to their present and future needs. _____
- 7.3 The principal is innovative in responding to changing needs. _____
- 7.4 The school supports parents becoming involved in learning about the school programmes. _____
- 8.1 There is good school spirit in this school. _____
- 8.2 Students would rather attend this school than transfer to another school. _____
- 8.3 Administration and teachers collaborate well in making the school run effectively. _____
- 8.4 New students and new staff are made to feel welcome and part of the group. _____
- 9.1 Policy and methods of operation are frequently revised. _____
- 9.2 Rules are few and simple and violations of rules are treated fairly. _____
- 9.3 Most student activities are well supervised. _____
- 9.4 Problems in the school are recognized and worked on openly. They are not allowed to remain unresolved. _____

- 9.5 The organization of the school promotes a desire to learn. _____
- 9.6 The principal keeps the staff informed about all recent educational issues. _____
- 10.1 Parents are willing to accept new challenges offered by the school. _____
- 10.2 Staff express their feelings openly and enthusiastically. _____
- 10.3 Students feel that teachers care about them as individuals. _____
- 10.4 The principal is visible and shows interest in all day to day activities. _____
- 11.1 The school places emphasis on the teaching of basic skills. _____
- 11.2 The school pays attention to students of all ability levels. _____
- 11.3 Teachers use a wide range of teaching materials and resources. _____
- 11.4 Teachers allow students to work in a variety of situations: individual, paired, small group and the class as a group. _____
- 11.5 The principal shows concern about academic performance and instructional behaviour. _____
- 12.1 Extracurricular activities appeal to each of the various subgroups of students. _____
- 12.2 The school's programme encourages students to develop self-discipline and initiative. _____
- 12.3 Those few students who need close supervision and high structure do not feel "put down". _____
- 12.4 The vice principals care about the students. _____

- 12.5 Students know the criteria used to evaluate their work. _____
- 12.6 There is a good relationship between the administration and the teaching staff. _____
- 12.7 There is a good relationship between teachers and office staff. _____
- 13.1 Teachers are available to students who want and need help. _____
- 13.2 The school has high expectations of its students. _____
- 13.3 The department head encourages teachers to seek new ideas for classroom instruction and evaluation. _____
- 13.4 Teachers appreciate professional development workshops. _____
- 14.1 It is pleasant to be in this school; it is kept clean and in good repair. _____
- 14.2 Cooperative teamwork is evident amongst staff. _____
- 14.3 Staff socials are a. enjoyable _____
b. well attended _____
- 14.4 Teachers often go out of their way to help one another. _____
- 14.5 The principal is very helpful to the teaching staff in the areas of:
a. curriculum _____
b. personal concerns _____
c. school operations _____

APPENDIX C

Climate Categories

- 1 Respect/Trust
- 2
- 3 Opportunity for Input
- 4 School Renewal
- 5 Caring
- 10
- 6 Climate
- 8
- 12
- 14
- 7 Continuous Academic and Social Growth
- 11
- 13
- 9 Organization

APPENDIX D

Would you kindly complete the following demographic variable sheet.

GENDER: M ____ F ____

AGE: 20-30 ____ 30-40 ____

41-50 ____ 50+ ____

YEARS OF TEACHING
EXPERIENCE: 1-5 ____ 6- 10 ____

10-20 ____ 20+ ____

GRADES PRESENTLY
TEACHING: 9 ____ 10 ____ 11 ____

12 ____ OAC ____

SUBJECT(S) PRESENTLY
TEACHING: _____

SUBJECT(S) PREVIOUSLY
TAUGHT: _____

POSITION: Teacher ____ Department Head ____

Vice Principal ____ Principal ____

Other (specify) _____

QUALIFICATIONS: _____

SPECIALIST AREA(S): _____

APPENDIX E

This survey is part of a field survey for My Master's thesis. I am conducting a pre-test of the survey at Nelson and would very much appreciate your response to the following questions:

1. Did the survey take less than thirty minutes to complete? Yes _____ No _____

2. Is the format easy to follow? Yes ____ No ____

Suggested changes: _____

3. Are there any statements which are awkward or unclear? If so, which ones are a problem and what specific changes would you suggest?
(Any changes you recommend can be written on the survey.)

Please return the survey and this questionnaire at your earliest convenience to my mail box.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

APPENDIX F

Dear Participant:

With the approval of the Research Advisory Committee of the Halton Board and the Coordinator of Testing and Research, John Cholvat, I am conducting a climate survey in several Halton high schools.

Your completion of the demographic variable sheet as well as the climate survey will provide me with important data which will reflect Halton attitudes towards school climate. In order to ensure anonymity, there is no need to identify yourself on either form.

An envelope has been attached to the back of the questionnaire. Would you kindly place the completed demographic variable sheet together with the climate survey inside the envelope and seal it. This envelope should be left in the large brown envelope labelled "CLIMATE STUDY" in the main office by November 15th.

The results of this study will be published in a Master's Thesis, and a copy of the thesis will be submitted to the Halton Board for inclusion in the Reference Library.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in achieving this goal.

Yours truly,

Nancy J. Kikot